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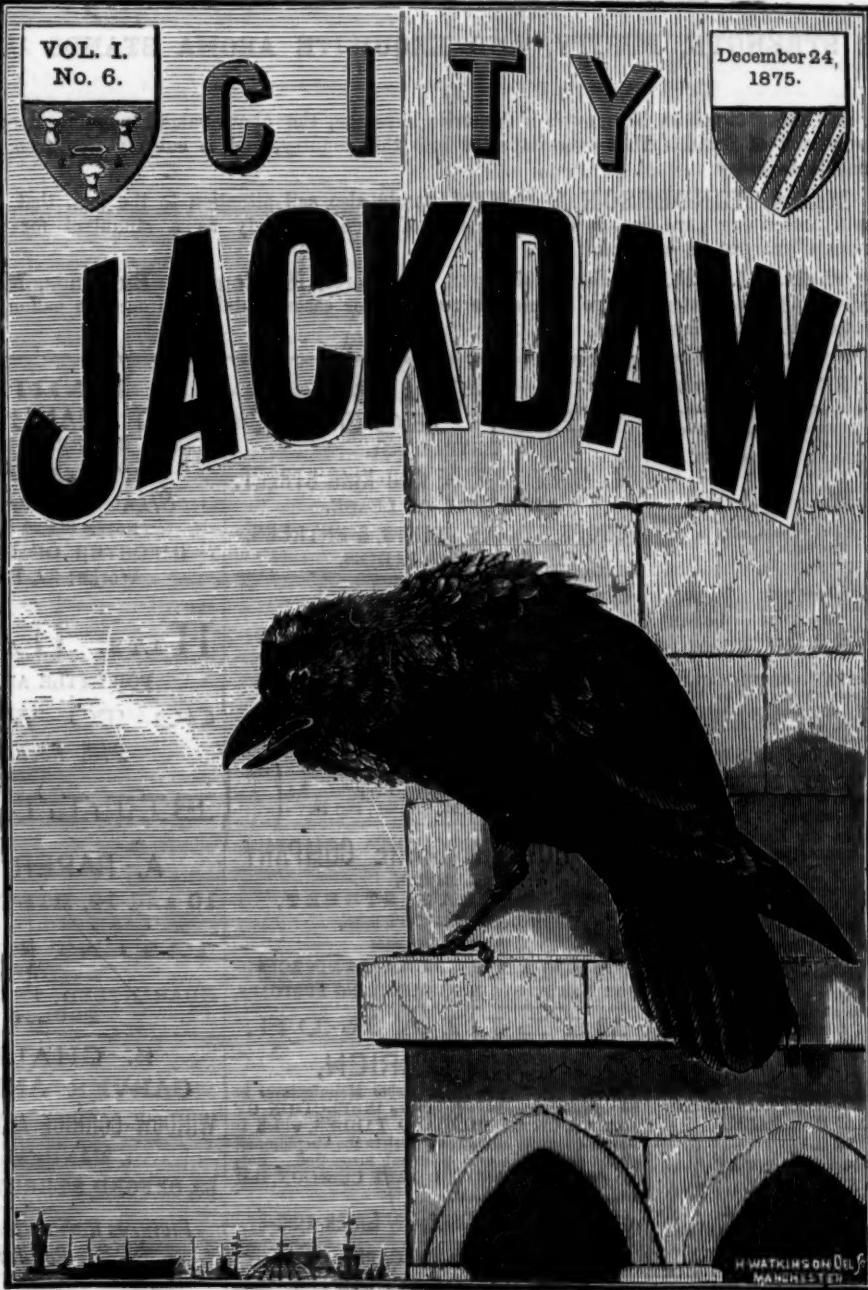
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 will never become hard.

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 RESPECTFULLY INVITE INSPECTION OF THEIR
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PATENT HATS
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 Over every other. They are the only
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BAYNES, Successor to **HUSBAND**.

THE CITY JACKDAW:

A Humorous and Satirical Journal.

VOL. I.—No. 6.]

MANCHESTER : FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1875.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.

MR. W. T. CHARLEY, M.P.

[BY HAL O' THE WYND.]

When Charley came to oor toon
The young Chevalier—*Jacobite Song*.

THIS gentleman made his descent upon Salford about eight years ago, with a carpet bag known to contain a voluminous lecture on the Irish Church, and supposed to hold within its ample recesses the Lord Chancellor's Commission. He had chosen a career which, unlike the privileged professions for which he appeared as special pleader, offered to the raw recruit possessing ability and industry, and fortunate enough to command political success in the constituencies, the prospect of the highest possible elevation. The youthful cadet of an Ulster house, wearing his heart upon his sleeve, and buoyant with hope and zeal, threw himself impulsively into the arms of the electors, and, it is said, their wives and daughters. He attained his political birth by a kind of Cesarian operation—he came, saw, and conquered. The carpet bag which carried his fortunes was lodged on the platform of the Salford Town Hall, and his standard was unfurled on the floor, by a boisterous fugleman, in the form of a monster bandana flaming in red and orange. When the election of 1868 occurred a few weeks afterwards, Mr. Charley had become as necessary to the Salford Tories as they were to the carrying out of his ambitious aims. They lent him solid support, and he gave them enthusiasm and a voice. He announced himself to the gaping electors as Divinely commissioned. He was the youthful David who should overthrow the Philistine giant Gladstone. For the Irish Church he was prepared to do or die; his motto was "no surrender." The Irish Church has indeed surrendered, after chaffering successfully for terms, and in the financial part of the transaction is shrewdly suspected of having "done" its disestablishers. Mr. Charley is still alive and kicking, and stands in the breach of the English Establishment, defying the armies of the Liberationists. He has been consistent in his practice of political stone-throwing, and smooth pebbles from the brook falling him, he has not disdained recourse to the gutter, from which he has latterly been scattering mud by the handful.

It would be vain to inquire the secrets of Mr. Charley's hitherto barren political success. He rode to his seat in Parliament on the wave of Tory reaction, which carried with it many other strange waifs and strays to St. Stephen's. One scans his speeches in vain for any scrap of political information. His oratory is alike destitute of grace and fire. In appearance and manner he is uncouth and ungainly; his matter is often unconnected, jerky, and disjointed. His meaning even is sometimes so ill-expressed that the reporters of the *Courier*, who always pay to him painstaking attention, practised as they are in the art of making the hazy speech of their party orators intelligible, frequently fail to unravel its obscurities aright, and the letter of "corrections," on the morning after one of his orations, is a never-failing dish in our contemporary's columns. Still Mr. Charley's public political appearances are almost invariably successful, and the published reports of his addresses are crackling with bracketed explosions of laughter and "great laughter." For the favourable impression he makes, the junior member for Salford doubtless owes much to the partner with whom he is unequally yoked. After the unutterable dreariness of Mr. Cawley's prosing, his sportive liveliness is an unspeakable relief to a wearied audience. To the ponderous subtleties of the skilled witness the impulsive babblings of his junior colleague afford a genial contrast. There is a hobbledehoyish

humour about Mr. Charley which, hit or miss, is always amusing. He enjoys his own jokes amazingly, and frequently laughs at them so long after their force has been spent upon the audience, that he is scarcely able to go on to the next carefully concocted impromptu from holding his sides. This jovial good humour is infectious; and when he is in his best vein, and always on the broad grin, the merriment of the audience with or at him becomes uproarious. In short, he fulfils the function of the laughable farce with which judicious stage managers follow the gloomy performance of the lugubrious tragedies of Kotzebue, dissipating the prevailing blues, and playing out the house in good humour. Mr. Charley's witticisms may not be, and are not always, in the best taste, and it is a special misfortune to the public when he occasionally hits upon a good thing. On such occasions he will hang about the constituency for weeks fishing about for the materials and the opportunity of a second success. His recent happy christening of Mr. Leatham as the Cork Leg of the Liberal Party is probably responsible for his present prolonged stay among us, inasmuch as in it lay the germ of the melancholy extravagances in which he desperately indulged on Monday evening. We do, however, give Mr. Charley the credit of believing that he is now as heartily ashamed of his loathsome and indecent comparison of Mr. Gladstone with the adulterer and condemned murderer Walnwright, who on the morrow was about to be launched into eternity, as any Tory in his constituency. Its breadth of colouring and disgusting suggestiveness justify the description of the *Daily Telegraph*—not often so happy or so bold in its utterances—that it was only its astounding character which rendered it fit for publication.

As a legislator, Mr. Charley has been remarkably fecund, though his offspring have been almost microscopically small, and most of them somewhat rickety. In the autobiographical flourish of trumpets with which he prefaced his speech on Monday night, he announced that he had produced six bills in four years, and *two more* gave a catalogue of the noble and learned men who had stood sponsors to them. They have dealt almost exclusively with such subjects as seduction, bastardy, and infanticide, and in their measure have been useful—when amended and made intelligible. In one case, unfortunately, by miscarriage, Mr. Charley managed for three months to disestablish and disendow the frail ones over whom he had thrown his protectingegis. We do not know whether the measure which he was compelled in the following year to introduce with the view of remedying this palpable defect of his first essay at legislation is included in the six of whose paternity he boasted on Monday. Another legislative effort of which Mr. Charley is proud is a bill to prevent lawyers from being diddled by their clients. This is a measure which we should have thought unnecessary, and we regret that Mr. Charley's personal experience as to retainers should have convinced him of the contrary.

At the bar, the brilliant young Irishman's career has not been so conspicuous for success. Although he has grappled, in print, with the most perplexing and most subtle questions of law, from the functions of the Appellate Court of Jurisdiction down to the rules relating to cab fares, he is still doomed for an uncertain space to walk the corridors at petty sessions. Lucky indeed is the prisoner whom Mr. Charley is retained to prosecute. All the chances which the law allows, or the court can award, are generally yielded him by his genial antagonist. With that peculiarly practical turn of mind which characterises him, the youthful barrister has occasionally made attempts to reform and retrench court practice. An illustration of his short and easy method of dealing with offenders was given at a recent city sessions. He prosecuted two men;

one accused of theft, and the other of knowingly receiving the goods which had been stolen. The thief acknowledged his fault, but the other prisoner denied guilty knowledge, and the case went to trial. To Mr. Charley's logical mind it was apparent that a summary process was sufficient to put an end to the case. He called a witness to prove that the goods produced in court, the theft of which had just been admitted by prisoner No. 1, had been found in the possession of No. 2, and then proceeded to address the jury. Mr. Recorder West, strangely enough, did not approve of this clear and rapid process, and he directed an acquittal. He was exacting enough to require not only that the theft, but the knowledge of it by the prisoner, should be actually proved to the satisfaction of the jury, neither of which steps Mr. Charley, in his own transparent honesty of nature, had considered necessary. An excellent good qualification which Mr. Charley possesses is zeal for his client. On one occasion his consuming earnestness in this respect earned for him conspicuous and distinguished attention at the hands of the judges of assize. He publicly thanked God that a jury, which had given a verdict against him, did not number a single Salford elector in its constitution. When the late Mr. Justice Willes desired to compliment Mr. Charley on the neat and gratifying tribute he had paid his constituents, the learned gentleman was robing in the library. A good-natured friend having conveyed to him the intelligence of what was in store for him, he was overcome by a fit of virgin modesty, and incontinently fled. Next day, however, he was led into the Court in triumph between two leaders of the Bar, and the judicial appreciation of his cleverness was manifested in the ceremony of his being publicly "wigged." This is the highest honorary degree that can be conferred upon a lawyer.

Mr. Charley is fond of political parallels, and we make him a present of a few. Like the rabid Rector of Ashton, he is willing to describe the great Protector, whose memory has been recently, though tardily, honoured in this city, as "that despicable and villainous Oliver Cromwell." Again, like this sweet and pure-mouthed cleric, Mr. Charley regards the statue which has been erected to his fame, "by the widow of a bigoted Nonconformist," "an indelible disgrace to the City of Manchester," and he is thankful (we now leave Mr. Edgar and quote Mr. Charley) that the sculptor (save the mark!) has turned the statue's back upon Salford. In this becoming attitude of the statue, we find a political parallel for Mr. Charley in the not distant future. Another "political parallel" may be discovered in the history of his Jacobite namesake. Prince Charlie made a successful raid as far as Manchester, carrying all before him, and encountering no successful resistance. There his success was stayed, and after a hurried and inglorious retreat, the remaining days of the *preux Chevalier* of Preston Pans were spent in a life utterly unworthy of the noble sentiment which his name once evoked. If Mr. Charley be not advised in time to put a bridle upon his tongue, and refrain from indecent and unsavoury "parallels," those who erewhile were his supporters may become equally ashamed of him. For ourselves, though we regard our friend's coming exile as inevitable, we should be pleased ever to think of his brief (and briefless) career amongst us with the happy toleration extended by an old Radical and Free-trader to a Tory J.P. and political wire-puller on his unexpected elevation to a railway "directorate," "Well, Mr. ——, it's not you, but your friends, who are to blame; after all, you are a good-natured fool."

SEASONABLE CONTRASTS.

Christmas Day.	Rent Day.
Good eating.	£ s. d.
Never saw such a plump goose before.	Awfully tough.
Never was so jolly in my life.	The mixture to be shaken before taken.
Kisses under the mistletoe: never loved her so much before.	Verdict for the plaintiff: damages, £500 and costs.
All my family round me.	Wish our poor relations wouldn't always turn up when they're not wanted.
Always enjoy service on a Christmas Day.	Fearfully long-winded sermon by the Bishop.
Bound to take the babs to see the pantomimes, my boy. Makes me young again to hear them laugh.	Most wicked boy on the face of the earth. Caught him shaving his sister, t'other day. All comes of his seeing that confounded clown.

CHRISTMAS JOTTINGS.

[BY A HARD-UP CONTRIBUTOR.]

LET us be thankful that Christmas only comes once a year, to impoverish us and overwhelm us with duns.

Why on earth should people want to eat more expensive things at Christmas than any other time?

Turkey! no! what's the use of paying for a turkey, when we can get enough beef for dinner for three and sixpence, just as nice, too, and far more digestible?

[BY A JOVIAL CONTRIBUTOR.]

Here we are! Let's all be jolly together, it's only once a year. It's a poor heart that never rejoices.

[BY A SERIOUS CONTRIBUTOR.]

My friends, reflect that Christmas comes but once a year. Be thankful that you have been spared to see the present Christmas, and consider that you may probably never see another.

[BY A YOUNG LADY CONTRIBUTOR.]

Isn't Christmas a splendid time? Whereabouts is the mistletoe?

[BY A DYSPESTIC CONTRIBUTOR.]

Wish all this feeding and tomfoolery was over. I'm sure to be ill after it.

[BY A CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTOR.]

Oh, how I wish every poor soul in the land had as good a dinner as I have to-day!

THE DISTINGUISHED FOREIGNER ON CHRISTMAS.

MONSIEUR LE REDACTEUR,—You are perfectly acquainted with the causes which am force me to abstain so long from writing to you. These incidents were of the most particular, and after long absence I return to find your unexpected journal. Now, if, as formerly, you do not find the remarks of your friend annoying, he will make his observations about the habitudes which knock his attention, if not in Manchester, then more so in this country where for the time he finds him. It is not by far that I have experience of the English festivities for once. There is four times that I am observe in England how this festival should keep himself, and I am by no means yet cease to wonder myself of the English Christmas. In commencement I cannot help compare with my country, where if he keeps a holiday one is gay. One does not close all the shops, as at an interment. He sings, he makes presents, he laughs, he is glad. It is to everyone to be gay. In England, also, without doubt, he is gay also, but it is by other fashion entirely. One sits at home, and there is of huge pieces of beef to cause indigestion, and the plum-pudding which is of tradition to make heavy the inside. Then he goes to church two times, and the church is adorned with leaves from the trees. After that he drunks himself with strong grogs, and says "it is a jolly Christmas, happy returns of the day;" but there is of all this nothing at all to amuse himself or to make him laugh. There is no spectacles at the theatres, no music, no concerts; and if he wants to amuse himself out of the house he may go for a walk. That is the sole recreation for Christmas, to mud his boots and be miserable. I do not begin yet to habituate myself to these things. I find myself at present dwelling with a family which in this manner will enjoy his Christmas. There is not to congratulate himself of looking forward to his pleasure. To eat the ros-bif and the plum-pudding in quantity, and then to poison himself afterwards, that does not please me. One has some desire to go to his bed with such entertainment. If he walks in the country he gets the "black devils," the spleen which he never has in his own country. He converses with himself, and is filthy; it is to make him groan with desire for some diversion. It is the English only that love to take promenades in the mud. If he goes into the town it is not possible to buy nothing, to see nothing, to enjoy nothing. It is to make him sick with desolation. He sees the announcements of Christmas presents over the shop, but it is not to sell, it is only to entrap the eye and make one buy the day after. Among all the most strange and uncomfortable customs of the English is this custom of keeping Christmas, which you say be the great *fête*. It is the time of mirth, but he laughs not. It is the time of amusement, but he does not amuse. Of the contrary, all amusement is forbidden; it is only all one to stuff him with beef, strangle him with pudding, and empoison him with brandy. Then he says "Merry Christmas, happy new year, and many returns."

STUDIES AT THE AQUARIUM.

[BY A LOVER OF NATURE.]

THE OYSTER.

IT was an oyster in a tub ;
Its shell was closed, and here's the rub—
The question ne'er has been decided
Why oysters should be thus provided.

Aquariums are very well,
But still no visit there can tell
The reason why an oyster's got
A thing which other fish have not.

Perhaps it is not right to call
That animal a fish at all ;
But, after all, the oyster's life'll
Remain unchanged by such a trifle.

In speaking of a beast so small, it
Is unimportant what you call it ;
It is a molluse, if you please,
If that your consciences will ease.

It does not matter to what tribe it
Belongs, so long as you describe it ;
And when you see them on the platter,
What does exact description matter ?

But this is quite irrelevant,
For thus the question solve we shan't,
Or ever find a reason sound
Why oysters should in shells be found.

Undoubtedly the shortest way
Of answering were just to say—
The oyster has a shell to live in,
Because it has, so you just give in.

But Nature's student higher aims,
And after thought he thus exclaims—
If shells those tender oysters lacked
In barrels how could they be packed ?

And thus we always, if we strive,
At just conclusions shall arrive ;
The oyster is but tender, hence
Its shell for man's convenience.

The fact it is no use to blink,
You'll see it is so if you think—
How could you pack those oysters well,
If that soft molluse had no shell ?

The oyster was in Nature's plan
Intended for the food of man ;
The shell preserves those oysters till
The man can eat them at his will.

And thus in Nature's works there lies
At every turning a surprise ;
But still she did not mean, 'tis clear,
That they should be so very dear.

The fishmonger his fob with joy stirs
When you have bought a hundred oysters ;
That is, if they are paid for—hem !
But let's suppose you pay for them.

“One pound five shillings,” he will say,
Politely, “you have got to pay
Per hundred oysters,” which, moreover,
Makes just eight dozen and four over.

From this you now may calculate
The price per dozen at the rate
Of just three bob, until you reach
The retail price of threepence each.

Now, if that man you would annoy, stir
Your cash, but do not buy an oyster ;
Poor people now should do without them,
And now I've told you all about them.

THE UNITED IRISHMEN.

THE following is quoted from the *United Irishman*, a newspaper published in Liverpool, and, we believe, edited by that great Irish patriot, Captain Kirwin :—

At a meeting of Home Rulers, held in the League Hall, in this city, after the discomfiture of the National Reform Union Conference, a few days ago, it was then and there resolved :

1. That the gentlemen present form themselves into a committee for the extermination of the Liberal Party, with power to lessen their number, by the use of shillelaghs, or other peaceable means. Canon Toole to find shillelaghs, and Father Gadd the peaceable means.
2. That Captain Kirwin be nominated the chief breaker of heads, and that he be respectfully requested to give up telling the public that he's of Irish descent, as that's unnecessary.
3. That a demonstration of Home Rulers be held in Liverpool, on the last day of the year, as there's no enthusiasm on the subject in Manchester.
4. That the best thanks of Home Rulers be given to Mr. Councillor William Brown, and that he be requested to allow himself to be selected as the next Home Rule Member of Parliament for Angel Meadow.

SHAVED BY A MURDERER; OR, THE REVERSED DOG.

(A CHRISTMAS STORY FOR THE MARINES.)

HE sat upon a milk-can fondling the most extraordinary looking dog that I ever saw, and I have seen many—but no matter. The cover was on. I did not know he was a murderer then, I thought he was a mere milkman. How was I to know what dark recollections were ebbing through that brain ? The dog wagged its tail—there was not a hair on it. The thoughts of that man's soul were as much a mystery to me as the contents of the can upon which he sat. How was I to know that that can was full of blood, not milk ? Perhaps it was, and perhaps it wasn't. I shall not reveal the secret, because, to this day, I am ignorant on the matter. The dog interested me more than the man I must confess. Suddenly it ran at me, and bit me in the calf of the leg. When I say “bit me,” I may remark that it didn't bite, it only appeared to mumble the leg. of my ——. This proceeding, however, led to my introduction to the animal's owner, and to the recital of the story which I am about to relate. He fondled the dog again, and again the hairless tail wagged. He said no word as I approached. The mark of Cain was on his forehead, yet I was not able to see it. Was there no scent of blood in the air ? none. There was no such warning, as I unsuspectingly entered on the strange interview—an interview fraught with horror—as you will perceive. I said, “That's a singular dog you have there, my friend ; what breed is he of ?” The man looked at me, and uttered a sardonic laugh, then he pointed to the dog's shadow, for the sun had burst from behind a cloud. I recoiled in dismay, for the dog's shadow was reversed. Then I saw how it was that that dog had not bitten me. He had come at me the wrong end first. I rubbed my eyes to see if I was awake. The dog came at me again. There seemed something devilish about this dog, so I quietly lifted him with my foot into a neighbouring reservoir. It was not a large dog. “Come,” said the man, “you let my dog alone.” I said, “My friend, it was the dog began it.” Then I looked for that dog, and saw him coming, tail first, at me again, and he was perfectly dry. There was no time for perplexity or wonderment, so I turned my attention to that dog to knock his brains out with a stick when he came near enough, but the stranger interposed. “Stay,” he said, “nor try to wound the invulnerable ; see, he is quiet at my command,” and the dog curled itself close to the milkman, and wagged its hairless tail. Did I say its skin was hairless all over with the exception of its head and neck ?—I forgot, but will proceed with my story. “As you seem interested in this dog,” said the stranger, “I will relate to you its strange history, but as its story is connected with painful incidents in my own career, swear that you will

never reveal what I am about to narrate." The dog gave vent to a noise like that of the ghost in Hamlet behind the scenes. I did not hesitate to comply with his request, because I began to be fascinated by the romance on which I had unconsciously stumbled. I pinched myself to see if I was awake—I was. The man settled himself comfortably on his can, the dog wagged his tail, and I listened to the following weird revelation : "It was Christmas Eve, of all times of the year, in 18—, when I first became acquainted with this dog. My chin was at that time as devoid of hair as is the tail of that dog at present. Why, oh, why did I ever come to be acquainted with this fatal animal! An animal which I verily believe is endowed with some satanic power of luring souls to destruction. 'Twas," said he, regarding the dog, which now revealed its reversed shadow, "indeed a bad day for me when first the idea of shaving that dog passed through my brain. It was then that I became a murderer; but come, this is no place for story telling, come to my humble dwelling. Oh! that fatal Christmas Eve. Come, stranger, and I will reveal all." So, with the spell upon me, impossible to shake off, I followed where he led, the dog trotting behind us, tail first, with its shadow reversed.

(To be continued in our next.)

PICKINGS FROM THE PANTOMIMES.

JSAY, here we are again, as the clown politely remarks when he calls upon the manager for his salary at the end of the week.

The ladies in the ballet "want but little here below, nor want that little long"—clothing.

"Oh, isn't it jolly?" squeaks poor Mr. Piggie, as the clown tumbles on him, "it's better than being roasted at Christmas, for at least one is allowed to have a voice in the matter."

It's grand to be the author of a Christmas pantomime, when the actors leave out all your good things, and put in some gag which makes everybody laugh.

CLEANING DAY.

[BY AN OLD FOGIE.]

MY present landlady, against whom I have no word of abuse to utter, observes with peculiar reverence a certain festival holden on Friday in each week. It is possible that she is not peculiar in this respect, and as I never came across the thing before in my own person, I will relate my experiences. It was quite by accident that I made the discovery of these rites and mysteries, which might have gone on for years by me unsuspected, but for that chance. It happened that I had on one Friday morning a number of letters to write, which I thought I could do best at home, so I went back to my lodgings about eleven o'clock. As I passed my window, casting on the room a cursory glance, I observed something out of the common. I observed a number of projections, something like a grove of legs of tables and chairs. The room was full of these. It was like looking in at the end of a furniture van. I thought that I must have come to the wrong house, but no, the number was right. I knocked, and after a considerable amount of scuttling, scuffling, and scrambling inside, the door was opened by a bare-armed slavey, very red in the face. On attempting to enter my room, I was brought up at once by an apparition of inverted furniture, tables, chairs, sofa, everything in the room sprawling pitifully, legs in air, and seeming to appeal mutely against these proceedings. My landlady feigned surprise at my unexpected appearance, and asked me if I was ill. This was the only way in which she could account for a bachelor venturing to come home on a Friday morning. All the rooms were in a similar state to mine, and as it was a pouring wet day, I had to go up and sit on my bed for three quarters of an hour, while my apartment was being put into a proper state to receive me. There is nothing in the world more doleful than sitting on a bed, and the position is such an uncomfortable one, you are seized with an overpowering desire to kick your heels about, and are only restrained by the fear of knocking

something over. If you lie down you will be covered with "fluff," which it will take at least a week's brushing to get rid of, and your landlady will blow you up for "dirtying" the counterpane with your boots. After some half-an-hour or more of this purgatory, however, I was at last allowed to resume possession of my room, which, between you and me, did not look a bit cleaner after the process than it did before it. How, indeed, should it? What human creature, I wonder, invented the method of "cleaning" a room by turning everything in it the wrong side up? I don't believe anybody invented it. I believe it is a horrid superstition or tradition older than Christianity itself. My landlady does not know that the next Friday after that mentioned, I came back in the middle of the morning, but I didn't go in. Oh, no, I didn't do that; but I sneaked around and took observations. I observed the horrible process in full swing, but there was no act of cleaning to be observed at all. The first thing to be turned upside down was the grate. The fire-irons were taken away into some mysterious refuge. After that it was the turn of the hearthrug. Then all the chimney ornaments were taken and put on the piano, covered by the table cloth, after which the table itself was very soon sprawling, legs in air, side by side with the sofa, flanked by the arm-chairs in the same predicament. Then those females stood and surveyed their horrid work for a while, with unfeigned satisfaction, and proceeded slowly and reluctantly to place these articles in their proper positions. They did not know that I was watching them, and never will, but I declare solemnly, that from first to last, nothing which had the slightest claim, in my mind, to be called "cleaning," took place. What they do it for, I don't know; but the foregoing is a tolerably accurate description of the usual proceedings on cleaning day.

CHRISTMAS PUDDING AT THE ANTIPODES.

[BY OUR QUEER FELLOW.]

ON a far New Zealand goldfield,
Once it was my lot to sojourn
At the happy time of Christmas.
All the long year I'd subsisted
Chiefly on salt beef and damper;
And at this especial season,
Being, if I so may term it,
Cupidus novarum rerum,
It occurred to me to mark it
With the making of a pudding—
Of a good old Christmas pudding.
Comrades had I, six or seven
Living with me in the forest,
Where we searched for gold together.
"But," thinks I, "I will discover
Not a hint of what I purpose,"
Wishing that I might surprise them—
How I did so, I'll inform you :—

Well, I thought I had a notion
Of the way to make a pudding;
So I took my way in secret,
To the distant digging township,
And I bought a lot of sugar;
And I bought some flour and raisins.
And I'd heard it said that porter
Was a good thing, so I got some;
And I thought a little mustard,
And some salt and Cayenne pepper
Would improve the general flavour;
So I seasoned it to fancy.
With the condiments in question;
With some whisky as a stopper—
Over-all (to use a sea phrase),
And I mixed them all together
In a scientific manner.
And I put them in a billy*—

* Sort of colonial saucepan-of-all-work.

In the grim and ancient billy—
Which I used for all my cooking,
And I set it all a-boiling
Some two hours before the dinner,
And I said with satisfaction,
I shall thus evolve a pudding
That will "fetch" the boys, I fancy.
Well, in due time, we assembled
To our dinner, which consisted,
Of the usual beef and damper.
And when all of us had finished,
I arose and with my finger
Pointed to the cooking shanty,
Where my billy was a-boiling ;
And I said " My trusty comrades,
You shall now regale your palates
With some good old Christmas pudding,
That I've been preparing for you."
So I headed a procession,
To the place which I had chosen,
For my culinary labours ;
And I took that ancient billy,
And I poured out all the water
(All my true and trusty comrades
Looking gravely on the meantime),
And I rolled my precious pudding
Out upon the rough-hewn table,
On the table formed of wood slabs.
And it had not altogether
The appearance I expected ;
But I would not be discouraged,
And I thought, " it is the climate
That is all that makes the difference."
So I said, " Fall to, my hearties !
Don't be backward ; there is plenty—
Eat as much as you've a mind to."
But they one and all protested
That they would not rob me of it ;
For they said " You've had the trouble,
And you ought to have the pudding."
All except a small Italian
Who was always very lonely
In his ways and very silent ;
He had never seen a pudding—
Seen a real old English pudding—
So he said, with true politeness,
" I will beg you for a portion,"
So I handed him a portion.
And I watched him with attention—
And the other fellows watched him—
And he said, with true politeness,
" This is really most delicious ! "
And as soon as he had finished,
He remarked, " If you'll excuse me
I will lay me down a little,
For my heart is sad within me."
And we all of us insisted
He should take the pudding with him
Since he seemed so much to like it ;
" For," we said, " It is our duty
Thus to cherish lonely exiles"—
So he took the pudding with him.
Well, next morning, that Italian
Called me softly to his bedside,
That is, to the heap of palm leaves
On the which he was reclining,
And says he, " My days are numbered ;
Never more my feet shall wander
Through the happy scenes of childhood ;
But I cannot die contented
Till you tell me, with your own lips,
What that pudding is composed of."

Now, although it grieved me sadly,
When I saw him so despondent ;
Yet I could not but feel flattered
At his mention of my pudding.
So I started, and I told him,
How I took a lot of sugar—
How I took some flour and raisins,
And a pint or so of porter,
And a half a pint of whisky,
And I only just had told him
Of the mustard and the pepper,
When he softly murmured " Thank you,"
And expired without a struggle.
And we planted him at even,
Underneath the spreading palm-trees,
And we took that Christmas pudding,
Which in life he loved so dearly,
And we planted it beside him,
And if any person asks me
What that poor Italian died of,
I can only say in answer
That I've not the slightest notion.

PAUPERISM AND THE BLACK DOCTOR.

WE were privileged the other evening to be present at the Withington Workhouse, when an indignation meeting of lady paupers was held to protest against the feelings of some of the inmates being outraged by the introduction of a gentleman of colour into the workhouse as medical attendant. Several of the members of the board, got up as lady paupers, through the agency of the workhouse master, succeeded in smuggling themselves into the meeting, and took part, of course in disguise, in its deliberations.

MRS. IN-DOOR RELIEF presided, and, in a few brief words, stated the object of the meeting, when the Guardians present joined in the discussion.

MR. VICKERS: I've been an in-door inmate of this workhouse for many years, and I don't believe in medical attendants at all. A drop of gin to my mind is worth all the physic in the world ; though, to be sure, some of the old ladies here prefer medical attendance. It's just another thing as to whether, if that attendance is necessary, it should be administered by a black doctor or a white one.

MR. M'CORMACK: For goodness sake don't let's propose to exterminate the inmates in that way.

MR. NOTOX: I never heard of such abominable cruelty. Why, in cases of confinement, the little darlings, bless 'em, would be sure to be in convulsions at the sight of ——.

THE CHAIRMAN: Not at all. The gentleman in question has been practising at the Infirmary, and a twist of his face has restored half the patients to life again.

MR. STORDY: Well, for my part, I think the experiment ought to be tried. Pauperism is greatly on the increase, and if the presence of a black doctor would frighten some of the able-bodied paupers out of the workhouse, the Guardians would thank Providence and take courage.

LADY PAUPERS: The brute.

MR. STORDY: Well, if I was a pauper—and I don't say as how I am not one—I would prefer to be attended by a black doctor rather than a strong-minded woman.

MR. FULLER: Just so ; most old women feel that way. I've just got the same repugnance against a doctor who's a Freemason, as I believe one of the rules of that craft is that all the aged poor ought to be poisoned off.

LADY PAUPER: Well, we are determined to resist any attempts to impose a black doctor upon us, and, if the Guardians insist upon doing so, we'll decline to take part in the Christmas festivities.

THE CHAIRMAN: Oh! lor', that would never do. I couldn't believe it was Christmas if I didn't have a dance with old Vickers.

MR. FULLER: Just so ; hadn't we better get the master to smuggle us out again ?

The subject then dropped.

WHAT SAYS HE? CAW! *Couper.*

MISTER POSTMAN, if you want people to deal liberally with you, point out that their boxes—Christmas, of course—are not big enough for this season of the year.

We don't believe a word of it. The Dean would have to have a still nobler heart than he has if he entertained the Tag-rag and Bob-tail Protestants at Christmas—without he wanted to explain the missal-to them.

Peace and good-will are all very well when they're practised. We prefer peas and roast duck.

A goose, my dear madam, should never be stuffed. It ought to be used as stuffing.

The Town Clerk may talk as he likes, but every sensible man would admit that if Sir Joseph wrote a sonnet on the subject it ought to be headed "Beau to a Goose."

Plum-pudding is not indigestible. We once heard of Mr. Leppoe, at the workhouse, ordering two hundred puddings, and afterwards saying "Dat he nobber enjoyed better health in his life."

Many aged paupers die the day after Christmas—so say statistics. That won't be the case this year, for as Sunday follows Christmas Day it will be a *dies non*.

We can't say what the Bishop will have for dinner on Christmas Day; but, if he's as hard-up as he used to be in his old country parish, to put the thing mildly, we think his admirers ought to send him a present. What's he say to a sucking Liberationist?

If he'd like a roast jackdaw, we don't object to put ourselves on the spit if he'll take us for his text, only he couldn't wonder if we turned round on him.

Father Gadd, does the Bishop of Salford fast or feast on Christmas Day?

We believe you. All the priests we ever met of your fraternity seemed to lead a fast life.

Mr. Vickers, the Chairman of the Chorlton Board of Guardians, can say whether it's true or not. Did the lady paupers object to a man of colour being appointed as medical officer because they were afraid of his ordering them too many black draughts?

We wonder they didn't object to Mr. Vickers being chairman, as he too's a man of colour—pink.

The Rev. T. H. Gill is beside himself at the success of his "spelling bee."

Can he spell "drone?"

Was the Rev. S. A. Steinthal ever a newsboy? If not, why did he, at the newsboys' dinner at the Exchange, on Saturday night, let everybody see that his circulation was going up?

The Bishop of Manchester continues to give advice to people who are about to marry. It's easier to give advice than practise it.

Alderman Heywood says if Manchester increases in the same ratio in the next hundred years another new Town Hall will be wanted. If it does, Mr. Heywood will have to descend (let us hope) rather than ascend to lay the crowning stone.

THE REV. T. H. GILL AND SPELLING BEES.

HOW doth the Yankee spelling bee
Delight the soul of Gill!
It gives him such a chance, you see,
Of showing off his skill.

How skilfully he frames his speech!
How neat he spreads his traps!
And oft proposes words he could
Not spell himself, perhaps.

But then he has the book for guide,
To which he can refer;
With dictionary by his side,
How can the teacher err?

He says that thus the public may
In education grow;
And, in reply, we only say
We hope it may be so.

There are so many sources whence
Unlooked-for good may come;
And Gill and bees, by Providence,
Perhaps are of the "some."

TRIFLES.

QUGHT capital punishment to be inflicted where a speculator has an execution put in?

Ought a man to get black in the face when he jokes?

Ought a man to speak from his convictions if he's been more than once in prison?

Will Miss Becker tell us whether a lord of a manor need be a manor a woman?

Would some of the hungry supers at the theatre say whether they would prefer the liver wing of a fowl or the cold wing of the stage?

BANK HOLIDAY.

A DEAD set is going to be made against the adoption of bank holiday this year, so we are informed, and, judging from the advertisements in the newspapers, we can readily believe it. For instance, the attorneys and solicitors intend to keep their offices open, in the hope that a few cases may drop in, where the parties have failed to settle their differences at the Cathedral on Christmas Day. The attorneys' clerks are very wroth at their employers' decision, and have sworn to go in for wicked deeds. The drapers, to a man, have resolved not to close their premises—to those who reside upon them. Bankers are going to keep the back entrances to their establishments unfastened, so that anyone, such as a burglar, may test the strength of some of their iron safes; and anybody who may have overdrawn his account will have the opportunity of returning it without being seen—unless he's counter-foiled by a policeman. The undertakers

don't intend to stop their carriages from being open, if necessary, but this is only hear-say, and on such a grave subject we mustn't make jokes. The butchers are going to be an exception to the rest of tradesmen, for they hope there'll be no necessity to take down their shutters to show what a clearance Christmas has made. The theatres, as a matter of course, are sure to be open, but the atmosphere, taking advantage of the bank holiday, will be "close."

THE SNOWDROP.

[BY A NOVICE.]

WHAT can one say that's new about this plant ?
The novice blushes, sighs, and owns he can't ;
But then a poet shouldn't be too modest,
Though his ideas may be of the oddest.

For even when
They're oddest, then
There may, perhaps, be lurking in his rhymes
Some little bit of common-sense at times.

This flower is not a type of common-sense—
A fact which is not of much consequence ;
But still, if all the flowers resembled it,
Those flowers could boast of very little wit.

A plant that grows
Among the snows
And frost, and other nasty sort of weather,
Is not a type of wisdom altogether.

But still, in spite of all this moralising,
The flower is there, a fact there's no disguising ;
They peep above the snow in woods in bunches,
And rabbits eat those snowdrops for their lunchees.

And so, at least,
By one small beast
The snowdrop's folly is appreciated,
In growing in the manner I have stated.

Now, in the garden, where there are no rabbits,
The man that is of rural tastes and habits
May stand and contemplate those hardy flowers—
Spring's heralds in the snow—for hours and hours.

It is a sight,
Refreshing, quite,
To see among the snow those tender stalks,
Whose blossoms nod and fringe those garden walks.

It is a treat, indeed, those flowers to view,
The which, my reader, I command to you ;
As far as I'm concerned I'd rather not,
Last time I did it, what a cold I got !

I have it yet,
My feet got wet
And cold, with which I will conclude, and so drop
The subject of these few remarks—the snowdrop.

WHAT IS A CONSERVATIVE ?

ANSWER, a diluted Tory ; or rather a person who has neither pluck enough to be a Tory, nor folly enough to be a Radical ; a believer in half measures and conciliation. He may be compared to a man who will walk half a mile rather than clamber over a gate. Jacob was a model Conservative from the time when he cleverly jockeyed Esau out of his birthright to the day of his death. Do you remember how he tried to get back into Esau's good graces by making him a present of stolen goods, and how Esau, poor simple Radical as he was, took it and made friends ? Jacob, of course, would not admit that they were stolen goods. It was only a justifiable political dodge that he had tried on his father-in-law. It was Esau, in his opinion, who was the spoliator, and so to save his own plunder from spoliation, he was fain to hand over part of it. Jacob's description of Reuben, when the old man was on his death-bed, is a truthful description of a Conservative ; "Unstable as water, thou shalt

not excel." Does not Disraeli, or Coningsby for him, give a similar definition of Conservatism ? A "barren thing, the mule of politics, which engenders nothing." These are the words, if we remember rightly, penned by the great Conservative leader, who at that time certainly had neither Mr. Ward Hunt nor Lord Derby either in, or on, his mind. Do you tell us that Lord Derby is not a Conservative ? You may be right, but he calls himself one for all that. Perhaps, however, a policy of half measures and conciliation is better for this great nation than no policy at all ; a national fate at least, from which we are at present preserved. Just notice what a comprehensive programme the Conservatives have got on paper. "Sanitary Legislation;" "Protection of Seamen;" "The National Honour;" "Landlord and Tenant;" &c., &c. Now, what have the Liberals got ? Nothing at all but Temperance and Disestablishment. In other words, the Liberal programme resolves itself into a crusade against Brewers and Bishops. *Oh tempora, oh mores.* Here is occupation for a party once great, and which aspires again to greatness. Who would not be a Conservative ? Don't all speak at once.

CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES.

THE Jackdaw has been unusually active this week in his peregrinations ; and he's picked up the following facts :—

Miss Becker and the Rev. Canon Toole were seen at the Shudehill Market buying mistletoe. Kissing the Pope's toe, the Venerable Canon said, was nothing to the fun.

The Bishop of Manchester is going to entertain the Dean, Canon Gibson, and Father Marshall at whist on bank holiday. Fourpence a corner, and sixpence on the game, including something to wet their whistles.

The Mayor of Manchester intends to treat Sir Joseph Heron, Alderman Willert, and several distinguished Councillors to the gallery of the Royal, to see the pantomime. Grand transformation scene : Sir Joseph bonnetting the Mayor, &c.

Captain Palin has had an interview with the authorities of the theatre, to see that the policeman, who is lent out for the night, shall not be beaten to death, and that the rest of the force shall be liberally entertained. Also to insist that no reference shall be made by the clown to the sheep's-head tragedy, unless the audience are requested to take a bit.

HOW THE TOWN CLERK WAS JILTED.

A STORY FOR CHRISTMAS EVE.

PEOPLE who are happily married often wonder how it is that there's such a thing in the world as an old bachelor. Yet there are such men ; and a more confirmed old bachelor than the Town Clerk of Manchester we don't think exists. If you had been permitted, the other evening, to have accompanied us on a visit to Sir Joseph, you would have been of the same opinion as ourselves ; but, as you were not, we may as well tell you of how it is that the Town Clerk remains a bachelor, and how he was jilted in his youth. We let him tell his own story, in his own way, only asking those who read it to imagine that it is told over a cheerful fire, and that long pipes and hot grog account for a few of the interruptions :—

"Bless my soul, but I must be getting up in years ! Why, my dear Bishop, I remember the time when I was as ambitious as yourself, and nothing looked too great for me to reach. And so you want to hear how it is that I am a bachelor ; how it is I am so fond of my churchwarden ; and why I prefer my slippers to be warmed by a housekeeper rather than by a wife. Well, not to make a long story of it, I'll tell you in as few words as possible. [I say, Walker, just mix the Bishop another glass of punch, and as the Dean has smashed a churchwarden, ask him to have a cigar.] Well, as I was saying, you want to know how it is I am a bachelor. Fifty years ago I was a young man, with as soft and impressionable a heart as most men, and a pretty face had for me as great a charm as it has for the most of the company present. It was a fine Christmas Eve,

in the year 18—, that I was invited out to a party in the house of a dear old friend, who has now a monument in the Manchester Cathedral yard. I remember the circumstances particularly, because my laundress disappointed me about my shirts, and it was the first occasion that I wore a dress coat. But why should I burden you with details. Her father was a rich man and loved me; his daughter was named Amelia, and I believe she doated on me. I needn't describe to you our courtship. It was like most other people's courtship, and, if Mr. Jackdaw there won't yawn so much, I'll bring the story to an end as quick as possible. Amelia had a brother, a youth of fifteen summers; he's now in the City Council, and if I am harder upon him than other councillors, it is because the ashes of a decayed heart bring back memories which I cannot stifle. This youth knew a boy named Aronsberg, who had brought with him from Poland the first magic lantern which ever entered this city, and at the gathering to which I refer—[thank you, Mr. Mayor, another bit of sugar, and that's quite enough water]—I say, at the gathering to which I refer, Amelia's brother had undertaken to demonstrate to us the powers of the magic lantern. The house of my friend was limited in size, but even in those days I was a practical man. I suggested that the audience should take their seats on the stairs, and that Amelia's brother, from the lobby, should show the light of the lantern on a sheet stretched on the door. "Sixpence for the stalls, gentlemen and ladies," I said, as I marshalled the way into the lobby, and tried to induce Amelia to take a seat on the lowest steps. But, fickle girl, she had a will of her own, and HE was there; he, my rival, was there, and evidently they had made up their minds to take gallery seats. I was on thorns. The magic lantern was brought to play, and the shades of slide after slide were thrown on the door, while Amelia's brother acted the showman. [Thank you, Mr. Mayor, that's quite enough at present.] Darkness reigned all round except where the lantern threw its rays. But amid all the laughing and chattering in the audience, two voices were silent, two voices were hushed. 'Twas her's and his—[I am not quite sure I am right in my grammar, but if I am not Mr. Price will correct me.] City Councils and Watch Committees! I could endure it no longer. One step forward and I had clutched her brother by the throat. He never uttered a word, for even then he was accustomed to have his parts of speech suppressed, and he dropped to the floor almost lifeless. "Now! now!" I inwardly exclaimed, "will I know the worst. Now! now!" I said savagely, no one hearing me but myself, "I will see whether she loves him." I reversed the lantern light. Need I describe what I saw. There they were, Amelia and her lover, in the gallery, and she was seated on his knee. Gentlemen, excuse this single tear: it's due to the memory of those old days. Oh! my dear Bishop, it's not worth mentioning in your next Sunday's sermon, for the lady is now Mrs. Alderman Blank, and her husband is fifteen stones weight. Here's their jolly good healths, and I don't regret now that I reversed the lantern light.

SERMONS IN VEGETABLES.

[BY A LOVER OF NATURE.]

ON A HORSERADISH.

A HUMBLE enough vegetable; humble in name, humble in nature, humble also in use, yet what a subject for a Christmas sermon. See the snowy slices decking the noble sirloin with deliciously appetising flakes, falling, through the rude operation of the knife and fork, into the gravy, and changing their colour then into a luscious brown! Now consider for a moment what the horseradish would be without the beef—an unpalatable stringy, stingy, thing—a thing that no one would seriously consider worth eating. Next consider what the beef would be without its Christmas; a mere joint, a hunk of meat, here to-day and gone to-morrow, or at best eaten cold! Not so the Christmas sirloin. Whoever thinks of the morrow or of cold beef at Christmas! Cold beef, though, is not a bad thing mind you, and I know many estimable people

who serve it up at the Christmas board with all the dignity of the hot joint, and so ease their consciences and give the cook a holiday. Not that I think that anyone wants a holiday at Christmas, that is, a holiday in the sense of doing nothing at all except perhaps getting drunk. I speak rather of the sympathetic Christmas that comes to every Jack or Gill among us, whether we will or no; which comes also to many of us without the beef, and as a matter of course without the radish. These things, however, do not make Christmas, although they may be taken by many as emblematical thereof. But towards the fourth week in December there comes over most of us a sort of Christmas feeling, the indefinite and undefinable shadow of a presence of former joys which may yet be renewed, of sorrows to be regretted, and once more lingered over, yet with a tender recollection also, for Christmas is, after all, a great soother. There is, apart from the guzzling and muzzling of Christmas, to which, mind you, the lover of nature does not object, an all-pervading essence of kindness extracted from the best side of human nature which we drink in unconsciously, and which is better to us than any quantity of plum-pudding, beef, and horse-radish. May we all be able to partake of these or similar dishes in plenty at this festive season; but at the same time let us acknowledge that Christmas is, and has been to us through all the years of our lives, something more than a mere season for feasting, something more than—

This is a very dull sermon that I am writing about Christmas; but are not all sermons dull? When you sit down to listen to a preacher do you expect him to crack jokes, and say "Here we are again, how are you?" No, the parson does not do that, nor do you expect him to do so. He talks to you about your soul and your sins, and why not? He is as dull as ditch water, and finds the lives and sins of his congregation but a dreary subject of discourse. Very likely he cannot find anything new to say about the text, on which, poor man, he is obliged to hold forth. Which of you, I wonder, pities the parson? None; you are all occupied in thinking how uncomfortably hard the bench is on which you sit, and wishing that he would finish. Well, well, it is hard on you, especially at this season, so let me dismiss you with a "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year;" as good a moral, you will allow, as could have been possibly got out of a horse-radish.

A CHRISTMAS BILL OF FARE.

WE have been interviewed by many young housekeepers in Manchester as to a proper bill of fare for Christmas time, and having consulted a few eminent caterers, we have drawn up the following:—

SOUPS.

Broth of a Boy.

FISH.

Old Soles. Eels. Bird Perches. D'Ace of Trumps.

Skates (frost-bitten).

JOINTS.

Sheer Legs. Saddle of Leather. Devilled P.D.'s.

GAME.

Six by Cards and Four by Honours.

HINTS ON MAKING POETRY.

[BY OUR OWN POET.]

LET us now suppose an aspirant of average abilities sitting down to write some poetry about Christmas. In the first place I admonish him, if he wants to write anything worth reading, to get rid of all ideas of beef and pudding. He begins fairly enough—

Welcome, Christmas, bluff and cheery;
Welcome, Christmas, once again.

Unhappily, however, the most seasonable rhyme for cheery is beery, and to welcome Christmas "once again," is merely to remind us that

Christmas came last year, of which no one wants to be reminded. The poet, however, gets over the difficulty about the rhyme; he continues—

Brightening our winter dreary,
Smiling through the fog and rain;

This is a left-handed sort of compliment of the season, but still it may pass as poetry of the doleful sort. The poet goes on—

Reddening the holly,
To the hue we love so well.

As may readily be anticipated, the poet can find no rhyme for holly except "melancholy." It is a curious thing that Christmas is a subject on which more doleful and depressing verses have been written than on any in creation. This is the rest of that stanza—

Banishing dull melancholy;
Brightening the flowerless dell.

It is really dreadful that people cannot write about Christmas on its merits, without mixing it up with melancholy musing or mouldy leaves, dripping hedgerows, and depressing influences generally. For example—

Welcome! to the gloomy city,
Turn our thoughts from greed and gain;
Soften thy tender pity
Memories of toil and pain.

Cheer the poor in crowded alleys,
Deck their homes with branches green;
Plucked in pure and verdant valleys,
Where their steps have never been.

Now, it is ridiculous to say this, though the idea is poetical, because if the poor people have never been in those valleys mentioned, they clearly cannot have plucked any of that vegetable produce. Perhaps the poet does not mean this, but if those poor are to wait until Christmas does the plucking for them, they will wait a long time. Moreover, if the only advantage of Christmas to a poor man is that he may possibly have his small rooms stuffed up with leaves, however green they may be, Christmas to that poor man would not be a remarkably desirable season. The poet, as nearly all Christmas poets do, winds up with the solemnity of a Methodist parson, and none of hisunction:

In each heart a welcome finding,
Christmas, may thy visits be
Golden links, for ever binding
Time unto eternity.

This poet's present effort may be cited as the typical Christmas poem which is received, I do not know why, with considerable favour by a large section of the community. The next effusion is more to the purpose, but it smells about as strong as a Christmas parlour after dinner, when the turkey has been disposed of, and the children are roasting chestnuts.

[There is no room for this poem.—ED.]

A CHRISTMAS PRESENT, AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

[BY OUR OWN ROMANCER.]

MR. JOSEPH BARLEY was in a melancholy mood in the season of universal mirth. Were we to stop to inquire the reasons of this unseasonable depression, we might search for a long time before finding them. Mr. Barley was prosperous in business, possessed a happy home, a smiling wife, four sweet children, with an immediate prospect of—and yet he was not happy. There are, however, griefs for whose cause we must look beneath the surface, just as there are certain phases of theatrical life which can only be beheld behind the scenes. Barley, who ought to have been happy, and who, indeed, did try to put a pleasant face on matters, was yet profoundly miserable, and without further words, the sufficient reason may be given that his mother-in-law was in the house. It was Christmas Eve, as I have said before. Mrs. Barley was in a delicate state of health, and there was Mrs. Honeymoon installed, bustling about, upsetting all the established ways—the household, sitting on the

children (metaphorically, of course), aggravating the servants, and bullying poor Barley until he was fairly cowed and miserable. If he ventured to go out to his club, or even for a walk, in order to avoid the presence of this terrible woman, he was taunted on his return as a truant and traitor to the domestic hearth. Even usually meek and pleasant Mrs. Barley caught the infection, as some ladies are apt to do, from her dear mother, and became harsh, fretful, and overbearing. Did the unhappy man stop at home, his case was by no means better than if he went out. As there is no person in the world so skilful in finding out imaginary grievances as a mother-in-law, so there is no person who is such an adept at making other people uncomfortable. Barley's mother-in-law was not a bad woman, but there is something in that relationship which renders the best of women intolerable. If Barley sat by the fire, Mrs. Honeymoon at once found it necessary to hang a number of "things" there to "air;" if he sat there and said nothing, he was rebuked for not talking; if he spoke, he was snubbed for talking nonsense; if he took any notice of his children, he was found fault with for fidgetting and encouraging them to be rude; if he took no notice of them, he was held up to scorn as an unnatural parent. In a word, Barley's mother-in-law was in the house, and Barley was a miserable man.

II.

This state of things endured for five days, and then came Christmas Eve, and with it came a crisis. The house was hushed, save for an occasional dash or excursion of petticoats and alarm of female tongues. The doctor and the nurse were sent for. One would have thought that at such a time at least Barley would have been left to enjoy such peace of mind as his mental anxieties would permit to him. Not so, for Mrs. Honeymoon took it upon her so to pester, bother, taunt, and annoy the wretched husband, that at last he was fairly driven to seek the street, and there to walk up and down until such time as the turmoil indoors should be over. Now, Barley was an affectionate husband, and as he paced the flags he thought kindly and anxiously of Mrs. Barley, which was all the part in this little domestic drama which was at present allotted to him. It was eight o'clock in the evening, nearly supper time, for there had been nothing to eat for him since five o'clock, and then only some cold mutton, nearly all fat. Preoccupied thus by hunger, affection, and gloom, Barley paced mechanically the pavement, waiting for intelligence. Meantime, within the house, alternate periods of calm and hubbub prevailed. At last, a flying, slipshod messenger, charged with the tidings, "Master, it's twins!" came skimming out at the door. Up the street she went first, then down the street, sniffing round corners and searching everywhere. After some time the news was borne to the expectant Mrs. Honeymoon that "Master aint nowhere about, mum." The feelings and expressions of the mother-in-law at this announcement may be imagined, but who shall picture the scene when hour after hour passed, nay, midnight passed, and still no Mr. Barley. Mrs. Barley was "as well as could be expected," that was one thing, but where was Barley?

III.

A heavy hand was placed on Barley's shoulder, and a gruff voice saluted him, "Come, this is the third time you have passed me on my beat, what are you up to?" Barley, unwilling to enter into domestic details with the officer, replied meekly "that he lived at No. 8, and was taking a walk." After some slight demur and the present of a shilling as a Christmas box, the policeman seemed satisfied and passed on. Presently, Barley being tired of the monotony of his promenade, turned down a side street, intending to make a circuit of the premises, and in carrying out this determination came plump upon the same guardian of the night again; who, recognising his man, and sternly oblivious of the shilling, collared poor Barley and actually ran him in. He would listen to no remonstrance; it was clearly a suspicious case of attempting to bribe the police too! Just as the charge was being taken the twins began to squall a duet. Mr. Barley, of course, sent for a friend to bail him out,

though he did not wish to trouble his mother-in-law. But he had two hours for solitary meditation before relief came, and in that time he arrived at a great and daring resolution. Mrs. Honeymoon was the cause of all this. She had made him horribly wretched for a week, and he would endure her no longer. So what came of the Christmas present of twins, made to her husband by Mrs. Barley was, that Barley became once more master of his own house. How the eviction was accomplished it is impossible to tell, suffice to say, that within twenty-four hours Mrs. Honeymoon was out of the house bag and baggage. When asked how on earth he manages to keep his mother-in-law out of the house, Barley pulls a solemn face and winks at his wife if she be present, if not, he winks to himself, but says never a word. I fear that *recipe* will go down to the grave with Barley. In the meantime the twins flourish, one of them being chairman of an educational institution, and the other (we believe) in the iron trade at Wigan.

NOTICE.

The "City Jackdaw," of Friday, December 31st, will contain a Sketch of "The Lover of Nature."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Articles intended for insertion must be addressed to the Editor of the *City Jackdaw*, Market Street Chambers, Manchester, and must bear the name and address of the sender.

We cannot be responsible for the preservation or return of MSS. sent to us.

Piano (Moss Side).—The Old Fogie is out of town.

My Christmas Pudding.—Unsuitable; and moreover too late for the current number. *Under the Holly.*—We are going to make a holly caust by and bye, in which your contribution will figure.

A Small Vicar.—You will never make a great noise in the world any how.

T. C. (Cheetham).—We do not know his an' T'cients.

Cives.—Your remarks are singular, your signature therefore is inappropriate, which is all that we intend to print of your communication.

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